DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 237 144 JC 830 531

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TITLE 1983 State of the District Address. Los Angeles Community College District.
INSTITUTION Los Angeles Community Coll. District, Calif.
PUB DATE 26 Oct 83
NOTE 14p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Associate Degrees; College Programs; *Community Colleges; Educational Innovation; *Financial Problems; Program Descriptions; *Retrenchment; *State Aid; Two Year Colleges; Two Year College Students

ABSTRACT

This annual address by the Chancellor of the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) focuses on the financial crisis affecting the district and on the district's innovative activities and programs. Opening remarks review the recent actions of the governor and legislature which resulted in the maintenance of the community colleges' tuition-free status, but also in a $108 million cut in their funding base. Next, changes in community college policies and their impact on educational access are examined. Problems due to budget reductions are then described in terms of specific decreases in institutional and student support services of the past 2 years. The following sections describe innovative programs and other noteworthy LACCD activities, including Project ACCESS, a program designed to improve the transfer function; a national study on the redefinition of the associate degree; cooperative programs with industry; the LACCD's self-supporting community services programs; and international education programs. After the district's long-range planning activities are examined, the paper concludes with comments focusing on the ability of the LACCD to survive the current fiscal crisis and eventually rebuild its programs. (LAL)

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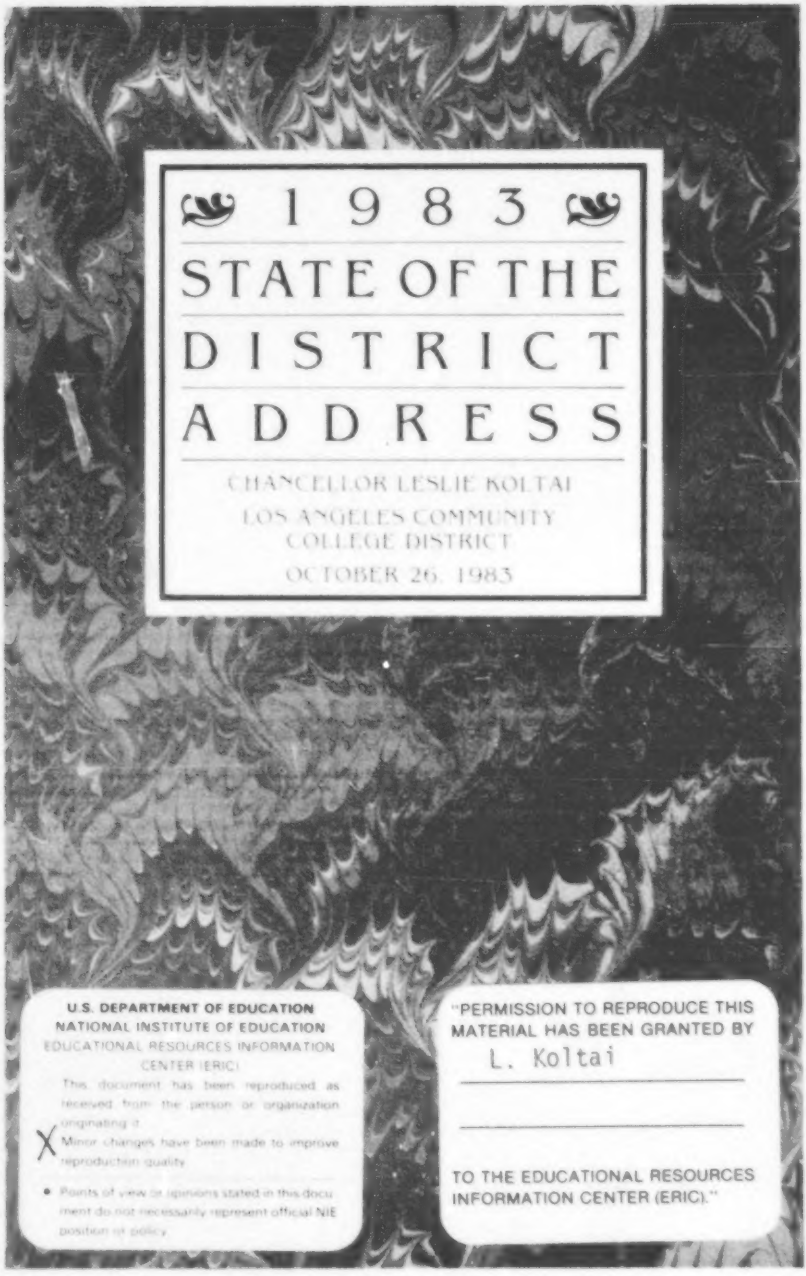

1983 STATE OF THE DISTRICT ADDRESS

CHANCELLOR LESLIE KOLTAI
LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

OCTOBER 26, 1983

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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INTRODUCTION

Each year, the occasion of the State-of-the-District address affords the opportunity to discuss the educational innovations of this District, innovations of which we are all justly proud.

This, however, is not a business-as-usual time. It simply could not be, in light of the action our Board of Trustees was forced to take Oct. 19, 1983, concerning possible layoffs of hundreds of members of our classified staff.

There are no words to express my sorrow at the series of events which brought us to that unprecedented, but unavoidable, personnel action.

Immediately following the Board meeting at which this action took place, I sent a personal letter to California Community College Chancellor Gerald Hayward, deploring our situation and seeking support for our continued efforts to work toward a solution to the fiscal problems that seriously threaten the state's two-year colleges.

We are also working with the Los Angeles Private Industry Council to establish programs at six of our colleges to deal with information and training needs of displaced workers, including our own.

In addition, we have hosted a public hearing of the Assembly Special Committee on Community Colleges, which focused on funding problems.

And every member of our Board is continuing to work diligently to find some way to resolve the dilemma in which we find ourselves and our colleges.

The chancellors of the San Diego, San Francisco and Peralta Community College Districts will be joining me to meet with Assembly Speaker Brown to attempt to find a solution to this crisis, since urban districts are carrying the brunt of the Governor's financial punishment of community colleges.

It is clear that these are extraordinarily difficult times for our District, as well as for a number of other community college districts throughout the state. I would like to briefly outline the path that brought us to this situation.

A YEAR OF TURMOIL

The 1982 State-of-the-District message was delivered the day after the election of George Deukmejian to the Governorship. In that message, I expressed the hope that his administration, among other priorities, would provide adequate funding for community colleges. We were confident that the Los Angeles Community College District would be funded accordingly.

I outlined our district's commitment to transfer education, vocational training, and remediation. I also emphasized the serious decline of our fiscal base, the maintenance of our capital investments, and the decreased funds for deferred maintenance.

I recommended to the Governor-elect to reverse the decline and then repair the damage which had already been done to community colleges in California.

Those words of hope were dashed — in ways not even the most pessimistic of us could have imagined. The long-term decline in the financial base of community colleges has not been reversed during the first year of the Governor's stewardship of California's community colleges, but has accelerated.

In the Los Angeles Community College District, the decline has translated into a $28.8 million shortfall.

Although the course of events is by now familiar to you, I would like to review some of what happened, why it happened, and the effect it has had on the people, programs, and services of the Los Angeles Community College District.

The current funding crisis began in January of this year when Governor Deukmejian presented a state budget of $22 billion, the same figure as the previous year, and a figure which allowed him to keep his campaign promise of no new taxes.

To meet that number, which is, after all, a cut in terms of constant dollars, the Governor cut the community college budget by $108 million. To make up for the cut he proposed a maximum $100 annual tuition fee on community college students.

The Legislature, for its part, rejected tuition fees from the start. Their budget fully funded the colleges, without tuition, in SB 851. In July, however, the Governor blue-penciled not only the $124 million increase provided in the Legislature's budget, but also the $108.5 million base.

All efforts at compromise since that time have failed. Although the Governor gradually yielded ground on the restoration of the base, moving from $23 million to $50 million to $75 million, to an eventual agreement on September 15th to restore the full $108.5 million, he remained unyielding on the imposition of tuition.

When the compromise package of bills containing the full base and student fees arrived on the Assembly floor, the bill for restoration of the base passed easily. The bill on student fees, however, ran into the equally unyielding position of Democratic legislators who were philosophically opposed to tuition.

When the vote resulted in a rejection of fees, the restoration of the base also died, since the two bills were "double joined," meaning that the defeat of one made the other inoperative.

Even if that problem would have been solved, the Governor settled the issue by vetoing the restoration of the base.

When the smoke cleared, community colleges found that they were still tuition free, but they were $108.5 million poorer than the year before. The struggle over principles was an expensive one.

It is important to realize what the principles are, for they are deeper than the tuition/no tuition issue. When the debate is held on that level, the public is treated to an inquiry as to whether or not a student can afford to pay the alleged 57 cents a day for a college education.

If the students you know drive new cars to school, you believe that they can. If the students you know cannot afford to ride the bus, you believe they can't. The fact is that we have both kinds of students in our colleges.

In my letter to Chancellor Hayward after the meeting of the Board of Trustees at which the lay-off decision was made, I stated that, in view of the state's developing income surplus, it is "heartbreaking to see the end of tuition-free education in California community colleges."

And this is the reason why the Board of Trustees and I sent a telegram to the Governor in which we asked that he "immediately restore the $108 million

previously cut from the state base funding of community colleges." Further we invited him "to participate in a discussion regarding long-term funding for the colleges which would take into consideration the interests of all concerned."

We also sent letters to members of the California Community College Board of Governors, in which we asked them if it would not be appropriate, given the surplus and their historical position on the issue, to reconsider their action of September 11th relative to tuition. We pointed out that their reconsideration would be "an important action for other organizations and individuals which have in recent weeks moved in favor of fees under the impression that it was necessary for fiscal reasons."

It is also worth noting that in an article in the Oct. 23, 1983, edition of the Los Angeles Times, a survey of Californians indicated that a predominant number are in favor of "using any surplus to increase state services — especially education — rather than returning it to the taxpayers."

The real issue is access, for which tuition is only a symbol. The great legislative struggles being waged in Sacramento are really about who our students are or who they should be. Those of us who participated in the debate were always clear that the central issue was who and how many shall have access to higher education in the State of California.

We should not lose sight of the significance of that issue to our fundamental mission, because the existence or non-existence of tuition will determine what kind of institutions ours will be. *In short, the struggle is over the soul of the community college in California.*

The questions which must be asked are: "Is there a middle ground between the free service and fee-for-service principles? Is a low fee really a compromise? Will the two years of publicly supported higher education currently provided to Californians through the community colleges be free or will they not be free?"

These are the questions the Governor, the Legislature, and the Assembly Special Committee on Community Colleges must answer, in light of the fact that the community college finance package for 1983-84 fell apart not because money was unavailable, but because the underlying principles are not susceptible to compromise.

The synthesis of answers will set the framework for the future of urban community college districts such as our own.

CHANGING ROLES— CHANGING STUDENTS

Our community colleges are continuously involved in radical change. I recently had occasion to look at a staff study prepared in 1976 outlining alternatives for the future. It listed three possible directions open to the District: one maintaining the status quo; one for moderate change; and one for radical change.

At that time, the reaction to the report by our college community, and the faculty in particular, favored the status quo or moderate change as the most

responsible path.

It is not the direction we have taken, however. All but a few of the options viewed as radical in 1976 are realities now, either mandated by state law or forced upon us by financial exigencies.

Just to remind you, those options included increased requirements for graduation, penalties for student withdrawal both by failing grades and by non-refundable fee, minimal co-curricular activities, elimination of health service offices, and reduced community services.

One may argue the merits of each of the changes. Some are healthy, others perhaps not. The point is that for community colleges, unlike the other segments of post-secondary education, the increased dictates of the state brought us, in addition to the changes I just mentioned, reduced funding for child care centers, the reclassification of courses deemed "avocational" or "recreational" as non-reimbursable, the virtual elimination of funding or attention to capital construction and facility maintenance concerns, and an ambivalence regarding the remediation function of community colleges —a cornerstone for access to higher education.

There is an abundance of state agencies, associations, and individuals already studying — or who will study — the California Master Plan for Higher Education in general and the mission of the community college in particular. It is an obvious indicator of crisis.

I am not surprised that there is such a flurry of interest in re-examining, reviewing, revising, and restructuring the 1960 Master Plan because the Education Code Section (66201) very clearly states that:

It is the intent of the Legislature that each resident of California who has the capacity and motivation to benefit from higher education should have the opportunity to enroll in an institution of higher education.

No wonder California has been known as the Golden State, the land of opportunity.

Education is one of the most fundamental ingredients of individual and societal growth and progress in our state. California is a true melting pot, a polyglot of individuals from all over the world.

The College Annual Reports for 1981-82 and 1982-83 indicate clearly that this is so.

According to 1980 Census data, the population served by our District is a rich mixture, with 45 percent white, 31 percent Hispanic, 15 percent black, 7 percent Asian, and one percent belonging to other ethnic designations.

Our mission mandates that we educate a heterogenous student population. For many of our students — refugees from foreign countries, persons from low income families, or high school graduates of modest academic accomplishment — our colleges are a first chance at higher learning, available to them only because of our proximity, flexibility of hours, or low cost.

For others, such as re-entry women and people in mid-career who wish to change their occupations, we are a second chance. And for many, we are the last chance for life enrichment and professional growth. All of these we take, and all of these we teach. And we teach them, again according to the Education Code, for as long as their capacity, motivation and academic performance will allow.

We do not, however, simply serve the students' needs. We teach the students.

in the full sense of the term. We who have gone before, down the paths of learning, know the vantage points of human knowledge from which our students can have a clear vision of the world, and we take them there.

There is an authority in education which we exercise for the common good. Our service, then, is to society.

Even in these difficult times, however, we have not forgotten our business is education, in which each component carries its own responsibilities: the faculty, to teach; the administration and staff, to manage and support; and the students, to learn and grow.

I remain committed to assisting all members of our college community to fulfill their responsibilities, even when our numbers are decreasing and our financial ability is diminishing day by day.

PROBLEMS DUE TO BUDGET REDUCTIONS

The impact of our financial crisis during the past two years led to significant decreases in instructional and student support services.

Since 1979, we have lost close to 300 (295) certificated positions and 427 classified positions, in addition to the 500 classified positions proposed for layoff in January.

This fall, a total of 1,176 classes were cancelled throughout the District, 652 of which were a direct result of the Governor's last minute cuts to our funding base. We anticipate even greater class reductions in the spring.

More than 33,000 students throughout the District tried to register for classes as their primary choice this fall, and could not do so.

The greatest number of stand-bys included close to 5,000 who were unable to register in mathematics courses; more than 3,600 who couldn't get into English classes; nearly 3,500 who were turned away from computer science classes; and almost 4,000 who were denied access to classes in business, accounting, and office administration.

These are vital programs for students who want to transfer to four-year colleges or universities, to get jobs and to become self-supporting, tax-paying members of our community.

In addition, our libraries are barely able to keep up with student demand. For financial reasons, a number of library staff vacancies have not been filled and acquisitions have been dramatically reduced. We are in the process of studying the consequences of library retrenchment in the District.

During 1982-83, there has been a significant reduction in counseling positions (11 percent), and we had to eliminate health services. From 1981-82 to '82-83, funding for programs for the disabled was cut by 25 percent and, as I indicated earlier, there was a 20 percent cut for child care centers.

In spite of these serious cuts, the creativity of our employees led to a series of victories in our professional life. I would like to share with you some of these endeavors and accomplishments which demonstrate what I believe is sound educational leadership.

ADVANCE IN TRANSFER PROGRAMS

One of the highest priorities of our institutions is to enlarge our transfer program. We actually pioneered a now nationally recognized program, which we have developed in cooperation with the American College Testing Service.

The program involves carefully-prescribed, mandatory orientation and assessment, along with course placement for incoming, first-time students. It provides us with the data to direct students to courses in which they have the greatest chance for academic success, and incorporates active counseling intervention to help them succeed.

Approximately 24,000 students have gone through this process at the six colleges participating in the project since its initiation last fall.

Preliminary findings among members of the pilot group indicate significant changes in student behavior, with improved retention within and between semesters. Among participants of the project in 1982-83, within-semester retention averaged 83 percent, compared to a districtwide average of 72 percent.

We have found that students in the pilot group attempted and successfully completed more units, and they added and dropped fewer courses.

In other words, we have seen greater student success, as well as more efficient use of college resources, at the participating colleges.

The program is appropriately called Project ACCESS, a program which was called for in the report of the Commission on Transfer Education.

Another aspect of our efforts to help transfer students is a cooperative effort with UCLA. This is also a national model of intersegmental cooperation.

More than 150 members of our faculty have already participated in seminars in geography, reading and writing instruction, as well as the writing across the curriculum project.

In addition, our faculty, in cooperation with UCLA staff, developed a guidebook, titled *The Shortest Distance to Learning*, which describes successful instructional experiences among the faculty.

One hundred of our instructors will participate in an upcoming seminar which will highlight the use of this text. Also planned for the spring semester are seminars in the use of composition assignments in English-as-a-Second-Language courses.

We believe these programs are helping our faculty teach students how to use writing as an intellectual tool with application in every discipline.

These are programs in which our Board of Trustees has had great interest. I want to express my appreciation to Dr. Juan Lara of the Office of Academic Interinstitutional Programs at UCLA for his willingness and enthusiasm in working with us on these programs.

The past year has also seen the development of the Laboratory Exercise Source Book for Physical Geography, produced in cooperation with UCLA, to which our faculty made major contributions.

And District faculty were also involved in designing the University of California/California State University Math Diagnosis Tests, as well as the first

UCLA Science Project.

We are also in the forefront of assisting "the urban student" to be more successful in the transfer program. The Ford Foundation recognized our efforts and granted four of our colleges a total of $100,000 in development grants which can lead to larger, three-year grants benefiting academic and counseling programs.

Special advisement and tutoring services are offered, along with innovative approaches to solving problems unique to minority or low-income groups. The four institutions are Los Angeles City, Los Angeles Harbor, Los Angeles Mission, and West Los Angeles Colleges.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE STUDY

The third program which has some national significance is our national study on the redefinition of the associate degree, which was funded by a grant from the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

As an outcome of the study, I recommended competency standards and testing for students seeking the associate degree, better university liaisons for the improvement of teacher preparation, and closer ties with business and industry to insure the value of the degree.

Just as we established new Transfer Education Committees on our campuses, I am recommending the establishment of Associate Degree Committees at each college to improve our degree programs, including matriculation and graduation, for the enhancement of the value of the degree as it relates to the student, the employer, and the four-year institution.

Access and quality — these are the watchwords of our District. The Board of Trustees approved graduation requirements, which have begun to influence our total instructional program, and the academic standards regulations require a continuous examination of the impact on student probation and dismissal.

I am convinced now that we need to make recommendations to the Board on ways in which we might assist the 24,000 students on probation so that they can be satisfactorily reinstated to full academic status.

These programs directed at enhancing student learning are paralleled by an equal concern for the teaching in our District. The excellence of our educational program depends upon the excellence of the faculty. It is critical in times such as these that we do all we can to protect and improve, where possible, the professional environment of the faculty.

In last year's State of the District address, I recommended establishment of the Commission for the Advancement of Teaching to deal with the important issue of quality instruction and faculty well-being. I am happy to report to you that the Commission has not only been established, but has made significant progress toward activities I believe will serve as a national model.

Under the direction of Dr. Cedric Sampson, Assistant to the Chancellor for Faculty Affairs, the Commission has set a timely agenda to address concerns of District faculty members. Possible issues

to be examined include subject matter updating, teacher support services, counseling and advisement, curriculum leadership, career development patterns, and the impact of educational technology on instruction. Since instructional support services are an important component of effective teaching, the Commission will also examine such services, with special emphasis on ways in which campus libraries might be strengthened even during this time of fiscal constraints.

It is my hope that the findings and recommendations of the Commission will result in a comprehensive plan for the District's future efforts in the area of professional development, retraining and the strengthening of the teaching function of our colleges.

HIGH-TECH, OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAMS SUCCEED

An equally important mission of the community college is the vast field of occupational education. The change in the area is revolutionary. The appearance of Private Industry Councils and other community organizations, such as the Los Angeles Business Labor Council, will create new programs, strengthen existing curriculum, foster the development of innovative delivery systems, and provide a better match between education and jobs. A much closer cooperation with business and industry is the order of the day.

Again, we are very fortunate to be in the forefront of forging these new ties.

Our Office of Occupational and Technical Education, under the direction of Linda Thor, working cooperatively with the colleges, has been actively involved in extending our programs to the worksite, while strengthening existing programs on-campus through faculty retraining, curriculum development, and acquisition of much-needed equipment.

In the past three months alone, we have received $500,000 in grants, equipment and other assistance from local business and industry to strengthen, revitalize or sustain occupational education programs at our colleges.

Just last month, Lockheed Corporation and the Lockheed-California Company made a three-year commitment valued at $676,000 which allowed the colleges to restore engineering programs that had been eliminated due to budget cuts, and to strengthen existing programs.

In addition to its original $3 million grant from the California Worksite Education and Training Act, the Office of Occupational and Technical Education secured a $4 million agreement with the Employment Training Panel, as well as $1 million in grants under the Investment in People program to retrain displaced workers.

The Job Training Partnership Act, which went into effect October 1st, 1983, offers further opportunities. Already $500,000 in programs have been approved. The comprehensive Displaced Workers Centers, the program which will serve our own employees, is proposed for JTPA funding.

During the past year and a half, approximately 2,500 members of our community have been trained, re-trained, or had their job skills upgraded under grants we have secured.

At this time, we are also investigating the feasibility of establishing a comprehensive Industries Services Program, which would integrate various activities into an educational delivery system responding to a broader range of individual and industry needs. Student assessment, career counseling, basic skills instruction, general education, occupational updating, and personal enrichment courses would be important elements of such a full-service educational approach.

The presence of this new business/labor/college interest is a two-way street. Our ability to train for business and industry is now being rewarded by the willingness of the corporate sector to provide us with financial assistance, such as Lockheed has done, as well as management know-how.

A number of corporations in the Los Angeles metropolitan area expressed a willingness to provide our administrators and managers with "hands-on" opportunities for learning strategic and financial planning, human resources and property management, and other areas vital to operating our District more efficiently.

I want to express my appreciation to First Interstate Bank, Pacific Telephone, the Southern California Gas Company, and TRW, as well as a number of other companies, which are already participating in this effort.

We are very much interested in assisting our faculty and staff to become more effective and productive. Last year, the Center for Professional Development organized and coordinated approximately 150 staff development events in which more than 2,500 District employees participated.

This year, we will also be offering seminars for department chairs on the important topic of department management, as well as providing extra time for their staff development activities. And an Employee Assistance Program, to provide help for personnel with alcohol and chemical dependencies, is now being developed in cooperation with employee organizations.

The new academic calendar for 1983-84, with its inclusion of two staff development days — and later, with five days — will also provide the opportunity for increased creativity and innovation, both in curriculum and instruction.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Community Service mission, which experienced the most dramatic change, is now a self-supporting program — a great change from a program which was supported by a special tax to activities financed by the participants.

The Los Angeles Community College District's Community Service program experienced an unprecedented increase in enrollment in 1982-83 over the previous year. The District served more than 100,000 people in various activities — an increase of 30 percent.

I congratulate the Community Services staff for the success. However, I would like to temper my observation with the suggestion that this program must be brought closer to the

mainstream of our educational effort with appropriate involvement from faculty, administration and, above all, the Board of Trustees. Under the leadership of Dr. Kenneth S. Washington, Vice Chancellor of Educational Services, a review of this program is in progress.

Our District is involved in two global educational programs — Los Angeles Metropolitan College for the military, and our own international education programs.

Metropolitan College represents a unique approach to the international delivery of community college level education and training. Originally established by this District and the statewide Board of Governors as a college to provide educational services for the men and women who serve this country while in military service, we are now re-evaluating the range of its offerings.

One exciting new prospect is a proposal that would link the academic and vocational-educational capabilities of this District with the United States Agency for International Development and would permit this District to share the capability of its faculty and staff with underdeveloped nations who need our assistance.

At this point we are talking about several ideas, but in the next few months I hope to bring you proposals for your consideration.

Our International Education program recently completed its most productive summer with 17 programs and enrollment of approximately 400 students. Workshops are now being planned on methods of "internationalizing" the curriculum, and we are examining cooperative efforts in curriculum development and "study abroad" programs. There have been two foreign teacher exchanges with additional exchange opportunities planned for next year.

I would like to remind you that the 1983-84 fiscal year was the third consecutive year in which we were required to develop a budget that reflected declining revenues. The revenue shortfall of $28.8 million is the most serious challenge for the Board of Trustees and the administration.

The financial recommendations in the Final Budget summarize our present situation, which cries out for long-range planning and the securing of "decent" financing for community colleges.

"WHITE-PAPER" ON LONG-RANGE PLANNING

The present budget reflects the realities of state funding restrictions. Our planning must change from crisis management to long-range planning.

In order to consider seriously the needs of the District, the following actions have been initiated. Last year, we created a broad-based, representative Committee on Institutional Reassessment, which developed the criteria for districtwide long-range planning. Key elements of this planning process are an assessment of educational needs, the integration of educational and budget planning, and increased participation in the planning process.

This year, I initiated a districtwide long-range planning administrative com-

mittee to develop a "White Paper" on the needs of the District.

The committee selected the title Community Colleges: Commitment to Access and Excellence. It is no accident that commitment, access and excellence interlock to describe most aptly the community college mission.

The White Paper will deal not only with the need to recover diminished educational programs and services, but also with the need to alter, develop, enhance and expand these functions.

Under the very capable leadership of Arthur Avila, President of East Los Angeles College, and Thomas L. Stevens, President of Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, the paper will address the educational needs of local residents, which may be satisfied by District programs and services, and will define the fiscal resources required to meet these needs adequately.

Preliminary findings suggest that restoration of financial support to the 1977-78 levels, for this District alone, adjusted for cost of living increases, would require an additional $104.3 million in general purpose funds.

In addition, enrollment growth, based on a typical participation rate, would require another estimated minimum $23.6 million.

State-eligible capital construction projects alone, submitted since 1977-78 but not funded, total $53.1 million.

In summary, it would take more than $178 million just to be where we were in 1977.

At an appropriate time, I will report to you on the combined product of the Committees on Access and Excellence and Institutional Reassessment.

The annual State-of-the-District address is usually the time when I announce new programs and activities of this District. This year, however, there have been few such activities to announce. Quite simply, our highest priorities are the survival of our colleges and the educational services they provide. It is to these priorities that all of our efforts will be dedicated in the year ahead.

AFTER THE CRISIS

While we are now in the midst of the greatest crisis ever to confront California's community colleges, and although we have far to go before we see the end of our difficulties, we must not allow ourselves to lose hope. We must not become so discouraged that we give up our commitment to quality education for our students, nor our pride in our colleges. We must continue to value what we do.

We must remember that the desperate situation in which this state's community colleges find themselves today was brought about by unique political circumstances and not by a lack of state resources or a lack of public support for education. State funding for elementary and secondary schools this year was the best it has been in years.

And we should not forget that the State Legislature at one time committed, not just the $108 million base funding package for community colleges, but also an additional $124 million in new money. That money would have allowed us to continue with our commitment to both access and excellence, a commit-

ment I believe is shared by the public.

On the national level, education is at the top of the social, as well as the political, agenda. The National Commission on Excellence in Education, the Carnegie Report on high schools, and numerous other studies of the past year have raised public awareness of the danger of underfunding our educational infrastructure to such a degree that education will be one of the major issues of the 1984 Presidential campaign.

As Chancellor of this District, I would be remiss in my duties if I did not share with you my belief that better days will come.

There will come a time when the funding crisis will be resolved, when permanent, long range and adequate funding will be available. And at that time, we must be prepared to move ahead with continued commitment and renewed vigor.

When we emerge from our current trials, and I do not doubt that we will, the Los Angeles Community College District must be prepared with a plan to rebuild our faculty, staff and programs. We must have vision now if we are to seize the moment when it comes. I believe that together we can survive the crisis and develop that vision.

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